

Moving forward on early learning and child care: Agreement-in-principle between the government of Canada and the government of Alberta ^[1]

Author: Government of Canada & Government of Alberta

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AVAILABILITY

- [Agreement in pdf](#) ^[2]

- [Press release in html](#) ^[3]

Excerpts from the press release:

Ken Dryden, Minister of Social Development, and Heather Forsyth, Alberta's Minister of Children's Services, announced today an important Agreement in Principle that further supports the development of quality early learning and child care for young children and their families in Alberta.

This announcement follows the Government of Canada's February 2005 budget commitment to invest \$5 billion over five years to enhance and expand high-quality developmental early learning and child care in collaboration with provinces and territories.

"From the beginning, we have focused on getting to what Albertans told us they wanted for child care, which was choice. Our agreement today gives Alberta the flexibility to invest these dollars in ways that meet the various needs of parents and children," said Minister Forsyth. "We look forward to continuing to build on a wide range of programs, recognizing that parents should have options and choices in caring for their children."

Over the next five years, with financial support from the Government of Canada, Alberta will build on existing strengths to further develop its early learning and child care system so that families and children will benefit from higher quality, more developmental programs, and so that there will be more early learning and child care opportunities. Alberta's approach to early learning and child care provides a broad range of high-quality programs and services. It includes strategies that establish links between home and communities.

Alberta will develop and release a strategic plan for early learning and child care, and will continue to report on those areas publicly, so that Albertans can track progress. Canada and Alberta will work together to conclude a detailed multi-year funding agreement for the period 2006-07 to 2009-2010. This new funding will be in addition to the approximately \$70 million available to Alberta through a trust fund for the period ending March 31, 2006.

The Agreement in Principle sets out a long-term vision, principles, and goals to guide the ongoing development of provincially regulated and approved early learning and child care programs and services for children under six, to be delivered by both public and private providers.

It also outlines specific objectives that the Government of Alberta will pursue over the next five years and how that Government will be accountable to Albertans. The agreement affirms that parents and families have the primary responsibility for the care and nurturing of their children and recognizes that early learning and child care is a provincial responsibility and that Alberta will define and monitor program and service standards.

Related link: [CRRU ISSUE FILE: Towards a national system of early learning and child care](#) ^[4]

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